

Since 2016, St Paul's has supported anti trafficking in India, firstly via Emmanuel Hospital with Tearfund's Connected Church scheme, then more generally but still through Tearfund. Recently, Tearfund has changed its policy regarding specific donations, so we now fund Oasis India direct. Oasis works in Mumbai with victims of trafficking, and the team from St Paul's who visited last year were very impressed with their work. You can read their personal thoughts on page 2-3.



**Oasis India tell us the following about their work:**

Our work began on the streets of Mumbai in 1993, helping the youth and children living in Kandivali railway station and providing skills development for women in the slums near

Bandra. Now, we work across four states in India – Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

**Vision:** Our vision is for a community where everyone is included, making a contribution and reaching their God-Given potential.

**Mission:** Oasis is committed to working in an inclusive, integrated, empowering and comprehensive way so that all people experience wholeness and fullness of life.



**WHAT DO WE DO?** Oasis India aims to prevent human trafficking and violence against women and children and to assist each person to flourish in their community. Interventions are aligned along six core components: Education, Skill Development, Prevention, Rehabilitation, Sports and Community building. Prevention of human trafficking remains the heart of all we do.

The interventions are holistic and strive towards protecting, equipping and empowering victims of human trafficking and those at risk living in the red-light area (RLA) and in other vulnerable communities in the city.

Counselling, health care, life skills and spiritual input play an important role in helping the women make the right choices, plus mentors suggest methods to bring about transformations. This in turn helps to transform the community to bring about safety for women and children.

Additionally, there is a night shelter for children in the RLA, and a residential rehabilitation facility for women who have left the RLA to find healing, training and to develop skills for independent living. There is also a group home facility for young men and women where they can learn to manage their time and money and live in a normal community. This is made possible with the support of local churches. In keeping with the mission, we hope that people we work with move from brokenness to wholeness.

### **Three members of the St Paul's team share their impressions with us -**

**From Carlton:** As the only man in the group, and being neither a pimp nor a client, I felt uncomfortable when we visited a large tenement-like brothel, which housed three women in a room on three floors of about 30 rooms per floor. We were invited into one room, as one of the women was unwell and needed advice from the nurse who was accompanying us. We prayed with them. Most of the rooms were padlocked with the women inside or guarded by pimps. In this oppressive environment, it was amazing how normal and hospitable the women were to us.

We later helped in the day centre, where the women's children were looked after. The kids ranged in age from about 5 to 17. We played games and did craftwork - kids are kids wherever you are! At night, the centre became a shelter for the children, as their mothers worked.

We also visited a project catering for about a dozen vulnerable girls. Here, they were able to learn a range of skills, including cooking and baking, tailoring, hairdressing, and a range of life-skills. The girls all seemed happy and were learning lessons that would equip them for life. The project staff were friendly and welcoming and seemed committed to their work. They appeared to be living out their faith and, while they are not permitted to proselytise, their lives clearly testified to their faith.

**From Annabel:** During our time with Oasis, I learned that in 500 sq. metres, there were 352 brothels that they knew of, and that it is very common for Russians to be trafficked from Russian to Goa. We visited a day care centre where the children made bracelets made from a kit donated by girls at my school. Another visit took us to a group home where they rehabilitate young women by teaching them a trade such as tailoring. We all indulged in retail therapy buying gifts whilst knowing that we were funding their next project. The smiles on the young women's faces said it all, apart from hearing them say, 'I made that' as we purchased their handiwork.



**From Julia:** Our visit to one of the Oasis projects was a memorable and emotional highlight of our India trip. The squalor of the setting, in the heart of one the red light districts of Mumbai, was overwhelming. We were taken to a day service where the children of sex workers would be cared for, taught skills and offered a different future. The love expressed by the workers was authentic and infused with God's love. They offered a ray of hope in a very dark place. We spent a few hours interacting with the children and adolescents and what struck me is that the need for love and compassion is universal whoever you are and wherever you live. I long to go back as a volunteer in the future

To find out more about the Oasis projects which the team visited, and the work specifically in Mumbai, do read [Oasis overview](#), a longer report written specially for St Paul's readers, together with more photos, or check out [www.oasisindia.org](http://www.oasisindia.org).





Our mission partner, **Dave Bookless**, works for the environmental organisation A Rocha International. Part of his role is to encourage churches and other Christian organisations to understand more about what the Bible teaches on having a godly attitude to creation.

Global warming is affecting the very poorest communities the most, whereas we in the more industrialised and consuming parts of the world have been more responsible for global warming. Thoughts:

- Perhaps as a matter of justice, we feel a responsibility to act to help put things right, and as churches, to lead the way.
- Perhaps we aim to worship our Creator and treasure His creation by the way we relate to the work of His hands.
- Perhaps we see potential for forging partnerships with others in our community and sharing our faith as we work together on our environment.

A conference entitled *Creation Care: An optional extra?* was recently organised by A Rocha, Global Connections and Climate Stewards, together with Tearfund and All Nations Christian College, and was hosted by Dave Bookless. Keynote sessions covered subjects such as *How green is the Gospel?* and *Putting creation care into action*, and included live speakers from Ghana and Haiti - two lands much affected by climate change.

Annabelle South and Karen Wheatley were invited to run one of the workshops: *Supporting Creation care - a UK church perspective*. Delegates expressed interest in the Creation Care scheme, which has been developed and piloted by St Paul's, plus our journey over recent years raising awareness of the environment in relation to our faith. By leading this workshop and sharing our experience, we have not only contributed to our mission partner Dave's work, but have also been able to resource a number of churches in this important subject. Dave will be telling us more about his work in next month's world church newsletter.





£500 has recently been sent by St Paul's to help finance the soup kitchens in Lima. Penny Marcés sends us this update

In Peru, where extreme poverty was falling steadily, though still a problem in many areas, soup kitchens have for many years been a huge help for those who can afford very little (or indeed nothing) for a meal. In “normal” times, central funding provided monthly supplies of rice, oil and some beans for registered soup kitchens, which have a list of “regular” clients as well as less regular ones.



The COVID-19 pandemic, with ensuing quarantine, meant many of these did not function for several months last year. In July, the government increased the basic supplies, recognising the increased need, and two soup kitchens near the Jesús el Nazareno Church in southern Lima began operating again. One of these has started to provide breakfast in addition to lunch (which consists of soup and a main course). The donations given by St Paul's over the last 10 months have, since July, been used to subsidise the cost of around 160 nutritious breakfasts each day, which could be e.g quinoa with apple, or porridge with milk.



In order to serve these breakfasts from about 6.30am, two cooks start preparing each day before 5am. Five cooks start preparing for lunch at 8.30am, which is served from noon onwards. Most of the around 130 people receiving lunch pay a small amount, which covers most of the ingredients; the subsidies cover the costs of the cooks, and the costs of water, gas, electricity, face masks, washing up soap, etc.



An additional challenge has been the fact the central funding is not currently available (quite usual for January and February whilst budgets are still being sorted out), but the Lord is good and extra funding has arrived to help cover the shortfall in several of the soup kitchens where the Anglican Church has links. **Thank you to all at St Paul's - over the last 6 months, the two soup kitchens near the Church where you have provided help have served over 20,000 breakfasts and 30,000 lunches.**



For information about any of the above, please contact **St Paul's World Church Team**: Karen Wheatley, Annabel Blanch, Sally Hulbert, Jonathan Papworth, Elizabeth Shaw and Sue Swain-Fossey [worldchurch@stpaulsdorking.org.uk](mailto:worldchurch@stpaulsdorking.org.uk)

More information about our Mission Partners:

[A Rocha - Dave Bookless, and Kailean and Kim Khongsai](#);

[Centre de la Réconciliation - Lille](#) ; [New Hope Children's Centre - Kenya](#) ;

[Jenny and Stuart O](#) ; [Oasis, Mumbai - India](#) ; [Open Doors - Syria](#) ;

[Penny and Juan Carlos Marcés - Peru](#)